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account of it is given in *Knowledge*, for Sept. 1, 1890. The observatory of Nice was founded by M. BISCHOFFSHEIM of Paris, and he has already spent more than \$1,000,000 for buildings and instruments. Among the latter is the great telescope of 30 inches aperture. The publication referred to is, I believe, also made at M. BISCHOFFSHEIM'S private cost. A brief description of the Nice Observatory will probably be printed in these *Publications* during the current year.

E. S. H.

SATELLITES OF MARS, 1890.

During the present opposition the maximum theoretical brightness of the satellites of *Mars* was 1.15, if their brightness at mean opposition be taken as 1.00.*

Their brightness at discovery was 1.91. Under good circumstances they have been readily visible in the same field of view with *Mars*, when the planet was not hidden by an occulting bar. They have been several times re-discovered by visitors who were looking at the planet, and who did not know of their existence.

During April and May two observers made a conscientious search for new satellites. The weather conditions were rather unfavorable. The general conclusions reached were that no new satellite exists within the orbit of *Deimos*, which is anything like as bright as one-fourth the brightness of that satellite. It is possible, though not very likely, that so faint a satellite as this may exist outside of *Deimos'* orbit, or within that of *Phobos*.

E. S. H. AND J. M. S.

SOLAR PARALLAX FROM THE TRANSIT OF VENUS PHOTOGRAPHS OF 1882.

Professor HARKNESS, U. S. N., reports that the photographs of the last transit of *Venus* (more than 1400 photographs being available) lead to the following value of the solar parallax; $\pi = 8''.842 \pm 0''.0188$. With 3963,296 miles as the equatorial radius of the earth, the resulting mean distance of the sun is 92,455,000 miles, with a probable error of 123,400 miles.—(From the *Report of the Supt. U. S. Naval Observatory*, June 30, 1889.

SPECTROGRAPHIC OBSERVATIONS OF *SPICA* AT POTSDAM.

In No. 2995 of the *Astronomische Nachrichten* Professor H. C. VOGEL considers at length all the photographs of the spectrum of α Virginis which have been made at Potsdam, and finds that they

* See a paper by Mr. KEELER, in the *Astronomical Journal*, Vol. VIII, p. 74.